



**For immediate release
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DCR SPONSORS ACCESSIBLE RECREATION FESTIVAL

Volunteers needed at February event featuring skiing, skating, and sledding

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has scheduled an Accessible Winter Recreation Festival at Dunn Pond State Park on Saturday, February 7. The festival will feature displays and demonstrations of accessible recreation equipment for cross-country skiing, ice skating, sled hockey, kicksledding, and more.

Sponsored by DCR's Universal Access Program, the festival is targeted toward persons with disabilities, as well as their families and friends. The free festival will showcase a variety of accessible outdoor recreation equipment to help persons of all ages with physical, cognitive, sensory, developmental, and other types of disabilities enjoy winter outdoors.

Cross-country skiing, cross-country sit-skiing, ice-sled skating, kick sledding, snowmobiling, and letterboxing will be offered for all to try. Instruction and assistance will be provided.

"Our Universal Access Program is one of the most innovative and groundbreaking programs in the nation," said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. "It has helped make our state and urban park recreation programs more inclusive, so that people with disabilities can participate independently or with their friends and families in a wide variety of activities."

The festival is scheduled for Saturday, February 7, from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Dunn Pond State Park on Route 101 in Gardner. In case of inclement weather, the festival will be rescheduled on Sunday, February 15, same time and place.

Accessible parking will be available, and the accessible visitor's center will have a fireplace for warming. Free refreshments will be provided. Advance registration is requested.

Volunteers are needed at the festival to help with registration, signage, parking, and to assist DCR staff members. Training will be provided on site. Volunteer hours will be 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

To register for the festival, or to volunteer, call 617-626-1294 or send an email to gigi.ranno@state.ma.us.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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DCR's Universal Access Program sponsors a wide variety of adaptive recreation opportunities in summer and winter at locations across the Commonwealth. In addition to winter activities, DCR parks and facilities offer summer activities including cycling, kayaking, canoeing, rowing, sailing, hiking, and bird watching. Skilled instructors and volunteers provide equipment, instruction, and support.

For more information on DCR's Universal Access Program and a schedule of activities, visit www.mass.gov/dcr/ and click on "universal access," or call 617-626-1294, 413-545-5353, or 413-577-2200 (TTY).

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, and dams, in addition to 278 bridges and miles of roadways. Led by Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr., the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.